

MINUTES

OF THE

TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL SESSION:

OF THE

NORTH RIVER UNITED BAPTIST ASSOCIATION:

AT THE

BETHLEHEM MEETING-HOUSE TUSCALOOA CO., ALA.

FROM 19th TO 22d, OCTOBER,

1855.

BY N. SMITH,

SECRETARY, Fayette C. H. Ala.,

CHURCHES & COUNTIES.		ORDAINED MINISTERS.		STATISTICS OF THE CHURCHES.	
Districts.				<i>Absentees marked thus*</i>	
1st. Dist.	Bethlehem, Tuscaloosa, Ala.	A. Files,	A. Files, L. Lee, W. P. Earnest,		
	Shepherd, Fayette,	J. Rushing,	J. Rushing,* B. A. McCool, G. Vice,		
	Pilgrim's Rest,	"	J. Walden, E. D. Rushing,* G. B. Collins,		
	Fayetteville,	"	D. G. Kirkland, W. Farquhar, A. F. Bell,		
	Hephzibah,	"	L. B. Harbin, S. Baker, Wm. Morris,*		
	Mount Joy,	"	W. A. Edmond, Y. Amerson, W. Cobb,		
	Providence, Walker,	"	S. H. Kurr, R. Adkins,* W. Randolph,		
	Pleasant Grove,	"	Wm. Sides, Thos. Davis, G. F. Sides,		
	Ebenezer,	"	R. Fiels, A. Deason, J. A. Jones,*		
	Jasper,	"	Not Represented,		
	Camp Spring, Fayette,	"	A. Bobo, M. Rainwater, W. W. Waldrep,*		
	Friendship,	"	P. Gillingham, J. Brock, G. Colbert,		
	South Carolina,	"	T. R. Tucker, J. A. Tucker, F. S. Ward,*		
	Antioch, Marion,	"	Dissolved,		
	Bethel, Monroe, Miss.	"	Isaac Black,* R. Black, D. Lockhart,*		
	Mount Zion, Fayette, Ala.	"	J. J. Wheeler, Wm. McGee,* J. Chaffin,*		
	Zion, Marion,	"	A. Markham, R. Adkins, J. H. Spann,		
	Pleasant Hill,	"	E. R. Little,		
	New Prospect,	"	G. W. Little, J. W. Blackwell,* B. Roden,		
	Enon,	"	Not Represented,		
	Shady Grove,	"	A. L. Dugan,* Rideout, E. G. Terrell,*		
	Holly Springs,	"	A. Gogan,* M. Neal,* R. Ivan,		
	Hopewell,	"	T. Harper, G. Berry,*		

MINUTE.

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The Delegates, to the 21st Annual Session, of the North River United Baptist Association; met with the Bethlehem Church, Tuscaloosa county, Ala., on Friday the 19th of October, 1855. The Introductory Sermon, was delivered by Elder A. Markham, from John, the 18th Chap., and first clause of the 36th verse; and after a short recess, the Delegates assembled in the Meeting-house, a hymn was sung, and Prayer offered by the Moderator.

1.—Read the Letters from the various Churches, composing this body; and enrolled the names of the Delegates.

2.—Elected L. B. Harbin, Moderator, and M. Rainwater, Clerk.

3.—An opportunity was offered for newly constituted Churches, desirous of uniting with this body to come forward; when a petitionary letter was handed in from Mount Zion Church, Fayette County, Ala.; Praying Admission into this Body, their petition was granted; and the right hand of fellowship extended and her Delegates invited to seats.

4.—Visiting Ministers, were then invited to seats.

5.—The following committees were then appointed:

1st. on arrangement,—D. G. Kirkland, A. Deason, R. Adkins, with the Moderator and Clerk.

2nd. On Documents,—A. Markham, S. H. Karr, W. A. Edmonds, R. Ivan, and J. Brock.

3rd. On preaching—A. F. Bell, W. Cobb, T. R. Tucker, J. H. Spann, and the Deacons of Bethlehem Church.

4th, On nominations—A. Bobo, R. Files, and W. Farquhar.

5th, On Finance—A. F. Bell, G. Vice, and H. Black.

6—Adjourned to half past 8 o'clock to morrow morning, Prayer by Elder R. Adkins.

Saturday Oct. 20. 1855.

6—Met pursuant to adjournment; Prayer by the Moderator.

7—Called for the report of the committee on arrangement, which was received, and the committee discharged.

8.—Call the names of the Delegates.

9.—Read the rules of Decorum, Constitution and Declaration of Faith.

10—Suspended regular business, and again opened the door for the reception of newly constituted, or dismissed Churches; when a petitionary letter from the Hopewell Church, Marion county, Ala., were received, desiring union with this body, their petition was granted, the right hand of fellowship given, and their Delegates welcomed to seats.

11—Received correspondence as follows, (viz) From the Tuscaloosa, association, a letter and package of minutes, by her Messengers, (to wit,) John Thomas, Willis Davis, and Thomas Smith. From the Canaan, a letter by her messenger, Elder N. Skelton; they were cordially received, by the Moderator, extending the right hand of fellowship, and inviting the Messengers to seats with this body.

12—Dispensed with our present plan, of printing our corresponding letters; and agree to have them written.

13—Return correspondence as follows: to the Tuscaloosa Association, A. Files, L. Lee, and A. F. Bell; Bell to write the letter, to the Muscle Shoals, E. R. Little, G. W. Little, and A. Markham. G. W. Little, to write: To the Canaan, L. B. Harbin, S. H. Karr, R. Files, and D. G. Kirkland, to write: To the Big-creek, R. Ivan, R. Adkins, and J. H. Spann; R. Adkins to write. To the Columbus, Wm. Farquhar, A. Bobo, and M. Rainwater,

Wm. A. Edmonds, to write:

14—Dropped correspondence for the present, with the Chickasaw and Aberdeen Associations, on account of the great distance between us.

District Meetings.

15—Received appointments of Dist., Meetings; 1st, Dist., the Meeting to be held with Pilgram Rest, commencing on Saturday before the 3rd, Lords day, in Sept., 1856; A. Files, to preach the introductory sermon, P. Landford, alternate; L. B. Harbin, to preach on Sabbath, in defence of missions, J. Rushing, alternate. 2d Dist., the meeting to be held with Pleasant-Grove, commencing on Friday, before the 2d Lords day in September, 1856; T. M. Gabbart, to preach the introductory sermon, J. A. Jones, alternate; L. B. Harbin, to preach at 11 o'clock, on Sabbath, upon the subject of Baptism, R. Adkins, alternate: 4th, Dist., the meeting to be held with Holly-Springs Church, Marion county, commencing on Saturday, before the 2d Lords day in Sept., 1856; A. L. Dugan, to preach the introductory sermon R. Adkins, alternate; A. Markham, to preach at 11 o'clock on Sabbath; T. Rideout, alternate. The 3rd Dist., has the next Association.

16—Suspended regular business, and received the letter from Ebenezer.

17—Appointed our next Association, to be held with Camp-Spring Church, 8 miles west of Fayetteville, commencing on Friday, before the 3rd Lords day in October 1856.

18—The committee on nominations reported, Elder P. Landford, to preach the next introductory sermon, R. Adkins, alternate; Elder A. Markham to preach at 11 o'clock, on Sabbath, in defence of missions, and immediately after to take up a public collection, to aid our domestic missions, J. Rushing, alternate. Their report, was concurred in, and the committee discharged.

19—Received our Treasurers report as follows.

M. Rainwater, Treasurer to North-River Association,	Dr.,
To amount sent up for minutes.....	\$35.85.
For Domestic missions, by W. A. Edmonds, per Mount-Joy, ...	\$10.00.
To collection on Sabbath,.....	\$18.50
Sent up by former Treasurer, per Indian mission,	\$ 1.90.
Collection of Sabbath, for do, do,	\$ 70.

Total, \$66.95.

	Credit.
For printing Minutes,.....	\$25.00.
Clerk	\$10.00.
Paid to order executive board	\$28.00.

Total, Credit.....\$63.00. Deduct Cr., \$66.95.

Remaining in my hands,.....	\$ 3.95.
Indian mission fund.....	\$2.60.
Domestic mission fund.....	\$.50.
Minute fund.....	\$.85.

Total on hand..... \$3.95.

20—Reported M. Rainwater, Treasurer, for the next year.

21—Regular business was again suspended, for the purpose of receiving, correspondence from the Canaan, Association.

22—Called for the Circular letter, which was handed in and read.

23—Adopted the Circular letter, and ordered it to be appended to our

Minutes. (See Appendix.)

24—Appointed M. Rainwater, to prepare a circular, on the duties of Ministers, to the Churches, and present the same to this body at its next session.

25—Adjourned until 2 oclock P. M. Prayer by Elder A. Markham.

29—Met pursuant to adjournment, Prayer by the Moderator.

27—The committee on Documents, made their report, which was received, as follows.

REPORT ON COMMITTEES.

We find a petition, from the South Carolina, Church, for a letter of dismission, from this body, and we recommend her request be granted, provided, she be found in good order. 2d we find two queries, sent up in the letter from the 3rd Dist., meeting, upon which they ask our advice. Query 1st. Is it right, for our churches, to receive members into their fellowship, who is an excluded member, of a sister church, belonging to a sister Association, when the church that excluded him, is in his reach? No.

Query 2d. Provided a church restores a member, who is an excluded member of a sister church, and Association, and afterwards dissolves, and grants him a letter in full fellowship, ought he to be received by his letter, into other churches, acquainted with the circumstances? And if not what course should be pursued, in order to set the matter right again? To this we answer, that he should not be received on his letter; we believe, that they would be illegally dissolved, and therefore, their letters null and void, and we recommend such a church, to come together again, and rescind their acts.

Also we find a petition in the letter, from the fourth Dist., asking for letters of dismission, for all the churches, in her bounds, belonging to this body, in order to form a new Association; to this, we answer, that we believe their petition, is contrary to Baptist usage.

R. Ivan, *Chairman.*

28—Granted the South Carolina, church, Fayette county, Ala., a letter of dismission from this body.

29—Adopted the answer, to 1st Query, sent up by the 3rd Dist., meeting, as given by the committee on documents; (which is "no.")

30—Adopted the answer given by the committee, to the 2nd Query, (which is "no,") and also their advice to a church, dissolving under such circumstances.

31—Adopted the answer, given "by the committee," to the petition, from the 4th Dist., asking for letters of dismission for all the churches in her bounds, belonging to this body; we think the petition, illegal and contrary to Baptist usage.

32—The committee on finance reported, for printing Minutes, and Missionary purposes, \$35.40, the money was handed over to the Treasurer, and the committee discharged.

33—Received the report of the executive board, which was adopted; and the board discharged.

Report of Executive Board.

At our 1st meeting, 'in December, 1854,' we received the first report of our Missionary, R., Adkins, in which he reported, the reception of \$63.55.

At our 2nd, meeting he reports, the collection of\$10.35.

Making in all\$78.90.

Which taken from\$126.90.

Leaving a ballance due, R., Adkins' of \$48.00

D. G. Kirkland, *Chairman.*

34—Appointed an executive board, composed of Brethren, D. G. Kirkland, M. Rainwater, A. Bobo, A. F. Bell, and G. B. Collins. The board is to

meet, at Fayetteville, on Saturday before the 3rd, Lords-day in Jan'y 1856.

35—Called for the report of our returning agents, which was verbally made as follows. We have collected nothing from the churches, for the purpose of liquidating the claims of D. W. Andrews, and the churches generally stand opposed to paying his claim upon this body.

Returning agents.

{ A. Bobo.
L. B. Harbin.
A. Markham.

36—Adjourned, until half after 8 o'clock, Monday morning, prayer by R. Adkins

Sabbath.

The stand was occupied, at 10, o'clock by R. Adkins, at 11. o'clock L. B. Harbin, preached in defence of missions, from Luke the 19th Chap., and last clause of the 13th verse: at the close of which, took up by public collection, \$20.00, for the support of our domestic mission. At 4 o'clock, G. W. Bide, preached, followed by P. Lindford, the discourses were truly interesting, much zeal was manifested by the speakers; the congregation was very attentive; and a manifestation of the out pouring, of the spirit of God, was visible among them, and we hope great good was done.

Monday Oct., 22nd, 1856.

37—The Association met at 8 o'clock A. M.—prayer by Elder Nelson, Skelton.

38—Called for the corresponding letters, which was read and adopted.

39—Called for the report of our missionary, which was received and adopted, as follows.

Report.

Dear Brethren, as your missionary, appointed at our last session, to ride two months, and report to the Board, at their next meeting, which was to be at Pilgrims Rest, on Saturday before the 4th Sabbath in December, 1854, for information respecting that meeting; I refer you to their report; since that time, I have received.—From Jasper.....\$5.00

From Antioch.....\$2.00.

“ Ebenezer.....\$2.60.

“ Pleasant Grove.....30.

Total.....\$9.95.

The above humbly submitted.

R. Adkins.

40—Voted to have the minutes of this session printed, with our rules of decorum, constitution and declaration of faith appended thereto. (See Appendix)

41—Resolved that we have as many copies of these minutes printed, as we can for the money sent, and that one hundred be reserved for correspondence, and the Clerk superintend the printing, and receive ten dollars for his services.

42—Appointed distributing agents, 1st Dist., L. B. Harbin, 2nd Dist., S. H. Kerr, 3rd Dist., P. Lindford, 4th Dist., A. Markham.

43—Received and adopted the report, of the executive board, as follows.

Report of the new board.

Your executive Board, humbly submits the following, at our first meeting, which was held to day, we paid to R. Adkins, for part services, \$39.25, which leaves a balance due him, of \$3.75; and we have on hand, for further operation, \$23.50; and further more; we request the delegates belonging to this body. on their return home, to collect, from their respective churches, all they can, and forward the same to the board, at its meeting in January next, which is to be at Fayetteville.

A. F. Bell, *Chairman*

N. B.—\$31.25, of the amount paid to R. Adkins, as set forth in the above report, was made up by the delegates, of this session, in less than twenty minutes, and handed over to the board.

44—Appointed a committee, consisting of 8, to draft Rules of decorum, and present to this body, which if approved of, is to be recommended to the churches belonging to this body. The committee is composed of Brethren, A. Files, D. G. Kirkland, W. A. Edmonds, S. H. Karr, A. Bobo, J. Brock, A. Markham, and R. Adkins.

45—Resolved that this body, recommend that each church belonging to this body, raise the sum of \$9.00, by the 1st, of March next, for the purpose of employing two Missionaries, to ride and preach 5 months; commencing the 1st, of July 1856, and also, that the following named Brethren, be appointed collecting and forwarding agents, in their respective churches.—Bethlehem,—L. Lee; Shepherd,—Willis Richards; Pilgrims Rest,—G. B. Collins; Fayetteville,—A. F. Bell; Hepzibeth,—S. Baker; Mount-Joy,—W. Cobb; Providence,—W. Randolph; Pleasant-Grove,—Thos., Davis; Ebenezer,—A. Deason; Jasper,—T. L. Reed; Camp-Springs,—A. Bobo; Friendship,—P. Gillam; Bethel,—Isaac Black; Pleasant Hill,—E. R. Little; Newprospect,—G. W. Little; Enon,—G. Cantrell; Shady-Grove,—E. G. Terrell; Holly-Springs,—R. Ivan; Mount-Zion,—P. C. Wheeler; Hopewell;—Thos., Harper; Zion,—R. Adkins; and further more, that the collecting agents, meet the board, at Fayetteville, on Saturday before the 3rd, Lords day in March 1856, and make their return to the board.

46—Adjourned to 3 o'clock, prayer by the Moderator.

47—The Association met at 3 o'clock, prayer by G. W. Little.

48—The committee appointed to draft Rules, (See 44,) reported the following for Rules of order; which was read and adopted: and recommended to the churches, belonging to this body.

Rules of Decorum.

1st.—Each conference shall be opened and closed by prayer.

2nd.—To invite visiting Brethren and Sisters, to a seat.

3rd.—To extend an invitation, for the reception of members.

4th.—To call for reference.

5th.—To call for miscellaneous matter.

6th.—No person shall depart from the service of the conference, without leave of the Moderator.

7th.—But one person shall speak at a time, and he shall arise to his feet, and address the Moderator.

8th.—No member shall be interrupted while speaking, unless he depart from the subject on question, or use words of personal reflection.

9th.—Every motion made and second, shall come under the consideration of the conference, unless it be withdrawn by him who made it.

10th.—Every case taken up by the conference, shall be decided or withdrawn, before another is taken up.

11th.—When any question is taken up by the conference, after allowing time for debate, the Moderator, shall take the question, by yeas and nays or otherwise, the decision thus made, shall be announced by the Moderator immediately.

12th.—No person shall speak more than twice, upon the same subject, without leave obtained.

13th.—The appellation of Brother, shall be used in our addresses, one to another.

14th.—The Moderator shall be entitled, to the same privilege, as any

member, provided he appoint some member to fill his seat, while speaking, but shall not vote, unless the conference be equally divided.

15th—Each conference, shall in all cases be governed by a majority of the members present, except touching fellowship, and in that case, the majority shall labor with the minority, and after due labor with the minority, then the majority shall rule.

16th—It shall be the duty of each male member, to attend his conference meeting, and in case a member shall absent himself twice, he shall at the next meeting, be called on to show cause of his absence, the second time, he shall be cited to attend, and in case he fail the third time, it shall be optional with the church whether it retain him or not.

17th—In case the pastor be absent at the conference, it shall be the duty of the deacons of the church, to go forward, and hold the conference.

18th—Any member violating the above rules, may be reprov'd, as the conference may think proper, only on the same day the offence may occur.

49—Called the names of the delegates, and marked absentees.

50—Resolved that the thanks of this body, are due; and the same are hereby tendered, to the Brethren, and citizens of the vicinity, of Bethlehem church, Tuscaloosa county, Ala, for their kindness, shown to us during this present session of our body.

51—A hymn was sung, and prayer offered by E. R. Little, and the association closed, by the delegates interchanging the right hand of fellowship, and singing, "O when shall I see Jesus."

L. B. HARBIN, *Moderator.*

M. RAINWATER, *Clerk.*

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CICULAR LETTER.

On the duty of church members to their Pastor. Beloved brethren, association as we are, in one general band of brother-hood, united together as a distinct people, known and read of all men, by our distinguished, and distinct features as a denomination; it becomes us well to look at our different posts, it is the will and appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King and head of his church, that they should behave towards their Pastor, as his ministers, who come in his name, bear his commands, and transact his business, and who are to be treated in every respect, in a manner that corresponds with their office, in a subordinate sense. They are ambassadors for Christ, and are to be received and esteemed in a way that corresponds with the authority, and glory of him who commissions them; whoever slights, insults, or neglects them, in the discharge of their official duties, disobeys and despise their divine Master, who will keenly resent, all the injustice that are offered them; no earthly government, will allow its messengers, to be rejected and insulted with impunity, much less will the Lord of the Church, those who entertain low thoughts of the pastoral office, and neglect its ministrations, who speak contemptuously of their ministers, who excite a spirit of resistance to their churches, admonitions and reproofs; who endeavors to lessen that just reverence; to which for their works sake, and on their masters behalf, they are entitled; certainly despise them; and not only them, but him that sent them also. And for such conduct, will incur the heavy displeasure of Christ:—Luke' the 10th, & 16th; 1st, Thessalonians, 5th, & 13th, and now brethren, let us look at this matter as we should. But to descend to particulars, the duty of church members towards their Pastors, include. 1st.—Submission to their just Scriptural authority; it is readily admitted, that the unscriptural, and usurped dominion of the Priest-hood, is the root, whence arose the whole

system of Papal tyranny: which springing up like a tree of poison, in the garden of the Lord, withered by its shadow, and blighted by its influence, almost every plant and flower, of genuine christianity, there is an authority, belonging to the pastor, for office, without which he is of no use as a pastor. Remember them that have the rule over you, said Paul to the Hebrews, 13th, & 7th.—Only them that have the rule over you, submit yourselves to such, 1st, Cor's., 16th, 5th, & 16th: Obey them that have the rule over you, submit yourselves, for they watch for your souls, the 13th, & 17th. This is not done, at all times, by the members of our Churches.

2d.—Church members should treat their pastors with distinguishing honor, esteem and Love. Let the Elders that rule well, be accounted worthy of double honor, especially, they that labor in word and doctrine, 1st, Tim., 5th, & 17th. Know them that have the rule over you, and esteem them very highly in love, for their works sake, 1st, Thess., 5th, & 11th, 12th. Now the members should do all they could, to honor their pastors, as Christian Ministers they should esteem and love them, and do all they could to render them comfortable. 3d.—Attendance on their ministration, is another duty church members owe to their pastors. This attendance should be constant, some of our members stay away, just long enough to keep from being dealt with, the pastor has to enquire after them, and this gives pain to him: this is not the way to honor our pastors; if the members have not love enough, for their pastor and the cause of Christ, to attend the ministration of the Gospel on every meeting day, he dishonors his pastor, and his own self, as a member and the cause of Christ. They should show to their pastor; their love and esteem towards them, by their attendance on sabbath's, or in the week, and at prayer meetings, and if they neglect all those, they show a sign of disrespect to their minister; and render themselves a fit subject of discipline.

4th.—Earnest prayer.—How often, and earnestly, did the great apostle of the Gentiles, repeat that sentence which contained at once the authority of a command; and the tenderness of a petition? "Brethren, pray for us," in another place, he ascribes his deliverance and preservation, to the prayers of the Churches. You also helping together, by prayer for us: 2nd Cor., 1st & 11th. Surely then, if the apostle, Paul, trusted in the prayers of the church members, much more, the poor minister at this time. Then, members should pray for their pastor, at home, and at church, and in the silent grove, and in the closet they should pray for the increase of their spiritual gift, and spiritual qualifications; and ministerial success: they should pray for them at the family altar, and thus teach your children, and servants to respect and love them, little does our church know, the trials, difficulties, and temptations, they have to bare in attending them as their pastor.

It's not a cause of small import,

The pastors care demands,

But what might fill an angel's heart;

And fill a Saviour's hands.

5th.—Members should have a very tender regard for the character of their pastors. A minister's character, is the lock of his strength; and if this once be shattered, he is like Sampson, Shorn of his hair, the pily of his friends, and the foundation of his endowments is upon him, and he is of no use to none; and this all because the church do not discharge their duty.

6th.—A liberal support; is the last duty I shall treat upon, and the Scripture is very explicit on this head, let him that is taught, communicate to him that teacheth, in all good things.—Gal., 6th and 6th. Who goeth a warfare at any time, at his own charges; even so hath the Lord ordained, that they

that preach the Gospel, should live of the Gospel.—1st Cor., 9th and 7th 14th. The necessity of this appears, from the injunction delivered to ministers, to devote themselves entirely to the duties of their office.—2nd Tim., 2nd & 4th, and 1st Tim., 4th & 13th 15th. I by no means, contend that it is unlawful for a minister, to engage in secular concerns, for necessity is law, which supercedes the ordinary rules of human conduct; and what are they to do, whose stipend is too poor to support a family? Ministers are under obligations to provide things honestly before the Lord; and in the sight of all men. To provide for his own house, and to owe no man any thing. How I ask, how he is to do this, and read his book, and ride to his churches, and preach to profit? I say he cannot, unless the members help him, they must be co-workers with him, and keep him up. Let it not be thought, that what is given to a minister, is a charitable donation; it is the payment of a just debt, it is what Christ claims for his faithful servants, and which cannot be withheld, without rebury; I spurn for myself, and my brethren, the degrading apprehension, that we are supported by charity, we are not pensioners, upon mere bounty; our appeal is to justice, and if our claims are denied on this ground, we refuse to plead before any other tribunal: and refer the matter, to the Great Head of the Church.

ROBT. ADKINS.

Received of M. Rainwater, \$21, in full payment, for the printing of the Minutes, of the North River Baptist Association, Nov., 27th 1855.

R. Allen Smith

BAPTIST DECLARATION OF FAITH.

1st. *Of the Scriptures.*—We believe the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and as a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, Salvation for its end, and Truth without any mixture or error of its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us; and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian Union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds and opinions, should be tried.

2d. *Of the true God.*—That there is one, and only one, true and living God whose name Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme ruler of Heaven and Earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness; worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love; revealed under the personal and relative distinction of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

3d. *Of the Fall of Man.*—That man was created in a state of holiness under the law of his Maker, but by voluntary transgression fell from that holy and happy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, wholly given to the gratification of the world, of Satan, and of their own sinful passions, and there under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defence or excuse.

4th. *Of the way of Salvation.*—That the salvation of sinners is wholly grace, through the mediatorial offices of the son of God, who took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the law by his personal obedience, and made atonement for our sins by his death; being risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in Heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, is every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Saviour.

5th. *Of Justification.*—That the great Gospel blessing, which Christ of hi

fullness bestows on such as believe in him is justification; that justification consists in the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life, on principles of righteousness, that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness, which we have done, but solely through his own redemption and righteousness, that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

6th. *Of the freeness of Salvation.*—That the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by a cordial and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of to the greatest sinner on earth, except his own voluntary refusal to submit to the Lord Jesus Christ; which refusal will subject him to an aggravated condemnation.

7th. *Of Grace in Regeneration.*—That in order to be saved, we must be regenerated or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind, and is affected in a manner above our comprehension or calculation, by the power of the Holy Spirit; so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel, and that its proper evidence is found in the holy fruit which we bring forth to the glory of God.

8th. *Of God's Purpose of Grace.*—That election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which he regenerates, sanctifies, and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting, and promotes humility, prayer, praise, trust in God; and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree that it is ascertained by its effects; in all who believe the Gospel: it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to our utmost diligence.

9th. *Of the Perseverance of Saints.*—That such only are real believers as endure to the end; that the persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

10th. *Harmony of the Law and Gospel.*—That the law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arises entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the means of grace connected with the establishment of the visible Church.

11th. *Of a Gospel Church.*—That a visible Church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinance of Christ, governed by his laws, exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by his word; whose only proper officers are bishops or pastors and deacons, whose qualifications, claims, and duties are defined in the epistles to Timothy and Titus.

12th. *Of Baptism and the Lord's Supper.*—That Christian Baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, Son and Spirit; to show forth in solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in a crucified, buried and risen Savior; that it is pre-requisite to the privileges of a church relation, and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the Church, by the use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

13th. *Of the Christian Sabbath.*—That the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and recreations; by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public; and by preparation for the rest which remaineth for the people of God.

14th. *Of Civil Government.*—That civil government is of divine appointment, for the interests and good order of human society; and that magistracies are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored, and obeyed, except in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord in the conscience, and the Prince of the kings of the earth.

15th. *Of the Righteous and Wicked.*—That there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked, and under the curse, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

16th. *Of the World to Come.*—That the end of this world is approaching and that at the last day, Christ will descend from Heaven and raise the dead from the grave to final retribution; and that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgement will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.

CONSTITUTION.

We the United Baptist Churches of Jesus Christ, are desirous of a reciprocal union. We therefore propose, to maintain the order and rules of an Association, according to the following plan:

We believe that the Churches of Christ are mutually independent of each other, and that the congregational form of church government should be carefully preserved; yet being convinced of the utility of friendly inter-pious counsels, on the part of each, for the mutual advantage of all, we hold it to be a duty

and Clerk, who shall serve one year.

Art. 5. This Society shall have no power to lord it over God's heritage, or to infringe on any official privilege or rights of the Churches in our Union but shall only be considered an advisory council in all matters respecting their internal concerns.

Art. 6. To give the churches the best advice, she can in all matters of difficulty, and if the union should be broken, between any of the sister churches, to inquire into the cause of the breach, and use her best endeavors to remove the difficulty; but if the breach, cannot be repaired, to withdraw from any church or churches, which they may look upon to be unsound in principle, or immoral in practice, until they be reclaimed.

Art. 7. To take up no case of any Church in the Union, without the consent of a majority of the Church.

Art. 8. Newly constituted or dismissed Churches, may be received into our Union, by their representatives, chosen as before stated; and the Moderator shall signify the same, by giving them the right hand of fellowship.

Art. 9. The Association, when convened, shall be governed by such rules as she may adopt. She may adjourn from day to day, until she shall have finished all the business that may be brought before her.

Art. 10. Every Church shall be entitled to a representation of three members.

Art. 11. To have the Minutes of the Association read, and altered, if necessary, and signed by the Moderator and Clerk before the Association rises, and have them printed if she thinks proper.

Art. 12. The Association shall in all cases, be governed by a majority of the members present.

Art. 13. Voting shall be confined exclusively to the body, in all acts respecting their internal concerns.

Art. 14. To amend the plan or form of government at any time, when a majority of the union shall think it necessary.

RULES OF ORDER.

1. with prayer.

2. addr

